

FISH & WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: February 13, 2014

Agenda Item: Proposed 2014–2015 Migratory Bird Regulations

Division: Wildlife

Action Needed: Final Action

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 5 minutes

Background

Migratory bird hunting regulations pertain to cranes, snipe, ducks, geese, swans, and coots. Montana participates in both the Central and Pacific Flyways and adheres to the federal frameworks established by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service in cooperation with the flyway councils. Frameworks that include season dates and bag limits are not finalized until late summer. States may be more conservative than these frameworks—to include local area closures—but may not exceed them. The inclusion here of migratory bird regulations in this biennial season setting process expands public process for season elements that may be adopted at this time pending confirmation or finalization of federal frameworks later this summer. In addition, the Commission will be presented with federal frameworks for late waterfowl seasons during the January Commission meeting to consider possible adjustments that would require approval through the flyway councils and USFWS.

For the 2014 and 2015 migratory bird regulations, FWP proposes to expand the 380 hunt area (Dillon/Twin Bridges/Cardwell area) to also include Madison and Gallatin Counties.

Possible adjustments to late season waterfowl regulations were discussed at the January 2014 work session and will be considered during the annual season setting process in August.

Final migratory bird proposals are unchanged from the tentative proposals.

Public Involvement Process & Results

In addition to public comment at the Dec. 12 Commission meeting, public comment ran through 5PM, Jan. 24, 2014. Comments and a comment summary were forwarded to the Commission.

Alternatives and Analysis

Proposals may be adopted as proposed, with adjustment, with additions, with deletions or no change from 2013 (status quo). No change would challenge the supporting justifications behind proposals.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale

Additional information for individual proposals have been included in Commission information packets and may be further articulated at the Feb.13 Commission meeting.

Proposed Motion

I move the Commission adopt the final 2014 and 2015 Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations as proposed by FWP and pending compliance with federal frameworks. I also move to adopt all other portions of the previous 2012-2013 migratory bird season regulations not affected by the Commission's actions today.